

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 EB-08 OMB-01 COME-00 TRSE-00 /090 W
-----022016Z 026685 /43

R 022026Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9436
INFO AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 03387

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, FR, MT, US, IT
SUBJ: FRENCH APPROACH ON MALTA: FURTHER QUAI COMMENTS

REFS: A. PARIS 244 (NOTAL). B. STATE 313031 (NOTAL).
C. VALLETTA 96 (NOTAL). D. VALLETTA 123 (NOTAL).
E. STATE 16534 (NOTAL).

1. WE HAVE NOW HAD OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT DEPARTMENT'S
COMMENTS (REFS. B. AND E.) TO BLOT, WHO IN TURN
EXPRESSED HIS SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR TIMELY AND
USEFUL US REACTIONS.

2. BLOT TOOK US REACTION TO BE ESSENTIALLY AN ENDORSE-
MENT OF CURRENT FRENCH/ITALIAN EFFORTS, BOTH IN THE
POLITICAL AND THE ECONOMIC SPHERES, AT SAME TIME
EXPRESSING "COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING" FOR US UNWILLING-
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NESS INVOLVE ITSELF DIRECTLY AT THIS TIME.

3. BLOT ALSO HAD NO OBJECTIONS TO OUR THOUGHT THAT,
IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING US EFFORTS STIMULATE INVEST-
MENT IN MALTA, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER FRIENDLY
COUNTRIES COULD BEST BE DEVELOPED ON A BILATERAL BASIS
AND IN EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,

RATHER THAN THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANY NEW "CONSORTIUM" CENTERED ON MALTA'S PROBLEMS. HE DID WARN, WITH EMPHASIS, THAT US "ABSTENTION" SHOULD NOT EXTEND TO POINT OF GIVING MINTOFF IMPRESSION THAT WE PLANNED TO "WITHDRAW" FROM MALTA AID PICTURE AFTER PRESENT US COMMITMENTS UNDER BASE AGREEMENT HAD EXPIRED. THIS WOULD PANIC MINTOFF; M THE FRENCH/ ITALIAN OPERATION FROM THE OUTSET; AND COULD LEAD TO IMPETUOUS GESTURES, INCLUDING OPENING OF MALTESE PORT TO THE USSR.

4. IN COURSE DISCUSSION, BLOT UNDERLINED THE HIGH DEGREE OF PRUDENCE WITH WHICH FRENCH AND ITALIANS INTEND TO PROCEED. FOR PRESENT, AS THE EC COUNTRIES MOST INTERESTED IN MALTA, THEY NOW ARE ONLY UNDERTAKING AN "EXPLORATION" OF THE PROBLEM WITHOUT ANY CHARTER TO ACT FOR THE NINE. IN THIS SENSE THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN AMBASSADORS IN MALTA HAVE JUST MADE THEIR FIRST TENTATIVE APPROACH, AS SIGNALLED IN VALLETTA'S REFTEL D, IN PRESENTING SERIES OF QUESTIONS TO MINTOFF THROUGH AN AIDE. IF THE ANSWERS PERMITTED, (BLOT PROMISED KEEP US PERIODICALLY INFORMED), THE FRENCH AND ITALIANS WOULD INTENSIFY THE EXCHANGE; BUT NOT TO THE POINT OF ENGAGING EITHER THEMSELVES, EC, OR OTHERS IN EITHER ECONOMIC, MILITARY, OR POLITICAL GUARANTEES. (SAME POINT HAD BEEN MADE TO US IN DIFFERENT CONTEXT IN PARIS REFTEL A.) FROM FRENCH POINT OF VIEW EXERCISE WILL HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, NOT ONLY IF IT PREVENTS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 03387

SOVIETS FROM GAINING Foothold, BUT, AS IMPORTANTLY,
IF IT KEPT MALTA FROM "FALLING INTO A LYBIAN-ALGERIAN
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE."

5. EMBOFF THEN ASKED WHAT FRENCH THOUGH THEY THEM-
SELVES COULD DO FOR MALTA IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE.
BLOT SAID FLATLY THAT FRENCH HAD NO INTENTION OF
EXTENDING LARGE NEW SUBSIDIES TO MINTOFF. ON CONTRARY,
MINTOFF HAS SAID REPEATEDLY THAT IT WAS NOT MONEY HE
NEEDED BUT TECHNOLOGY AND INVESTMENT TO HELP COPE WITH
UNEMPLOYMENT. TO EXTENT MINTOFF DID NEED MONEY, BLOT
THOUGHT THE LYBIANS SHOULD PROVIDE THE LION'S SHARE.
FRANCE ITSELF COULD MAKE THREE-PRONGED CONTRIBUTION:
IT COULD OFFER MINTOFF FURTHER "TECHNOLOGICAL" EFFORT,
SUCH AS TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, BLOT SAID FRENCH
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HAD INSTALLED. IT COULD HELP MALTA INDIRECTLY THROUGH
THE EC ASSOCIATION MECHANISM. AND IT COULD MAKE
ENLARGED BILATERAL TRADE ARRANGEMENTS. BEYOND THAT,
FRANCE COULD ENCOURAGE OTHER FRIENDLY STATES IN APPRO-
PRIATE INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL FRAMEWORK TO ASSIST.

7. COMMENT: BLOT PROMISED TO CONTINUE KEEP US INFORMED
AS CONTACTS WITH MALTESE AS WELL AS QUAI'S OWN THINKING
DEVELOPS. DEPARTMENT'S AND VALLETTA'S FURTHER COMMENTS
PARTICULARLY ON IMPLICATIONS OF POINT RAISED PARA 3
WILL BE MOST HELPFUL TO MAINTAIN DIALOGUE. WE EXPECT
TO SEE BLOT AGAIN FEBRUARY 9.
RUSH

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